

Low Income Households and Asthma

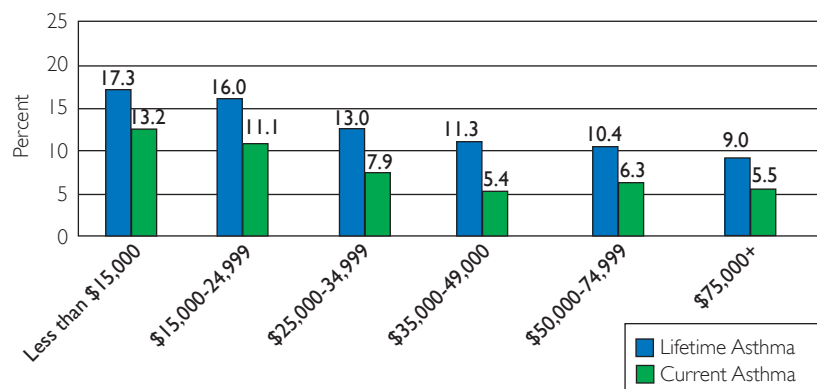
IN NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina adults living in households with incomes of less than \$15,000 are more affected with asthma than those who live in households with incomes of more than \$15,000 a year¹:

- **18.5% of adults in households with incomes less than \$15,000 have had a diagnosis of asthma (lifetime asthma),** compared with 10.2-16.0% for other income groups.¹
- **13.2% of adults in households with incomes less than \$15,000 still have asthma (current asthma),** compared with 5.4-11.1% for other income groups.¹



Adults with Lifetime and Current Asthma, by Income, North Carolina, 2009



Source: State Center for Health Statistics, N.C., 2010.



Ten key tips to controlling and managing asthma⁴

1. Visit your doctor every six months, even if you think your asthma is under control.
2. Be sure to use your asthma medicines correctly.
3. Always use a holding chamber (or spacer) with your metered dose inhaler.
4. Make sure you always have access to your asthma medicines.
5. Get a written asthma action plan from your doctor. Make sure you understand it and have it updated at least every year.
6. Know what triggers your asthma and how to avoid conditions that may trigger an attack.
7. Ask your doctor about tests to determine if you have allergies to specific triggers.
8. Avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.
9. Ask your doctor about testing your lung function (spirometry) at least every 1-2 years.
10. Be sure you get a flu shot every year (available in the fall).

In the United States:

- Adults in households below the poverty threshold* have higher lifetime and current asthma prevalence (16.6%, 10.9%) than adults in households above the poverty threshold (12.4-14.0%, 7.1-8.4%).²
- Low income children account for about 37% of all children, but represent 58% of children with asthma.³

¹ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (2010).

² Summary Health Statistics for U.S. Adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2009. National Health Interview Survey, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2009).

³ Changing Policy: The Elements for Improving Childhood Asthma Outcomes, George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, 2010.

⁴ About Asthma. (<http://hud.gov/offices/lead/healthyhomes/asthma.cfm>) Accessed December 21, 2009.

* Poverty status is based on family income and family size using the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty thresholds for the previous calendar year.

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For more information, please visit
the NC Asthma Program's website
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